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General Assembly

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Fifty-fifth session

Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Observer status for the Economic Community of Central African States in the General Assembly

Letter dated 9 November 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In conformity with the provisions of rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and on instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the letter and memorandum sent by His Excellency Mr. Santiago Nzobeya Efuman, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Francophone Affairs of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, in his capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Community of Central African States, on behalf of the member States, requesting the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly of an additional item entitled "Observer status for the Economic Community of Central African States in the General Assembly".

(*Signed*) José Luis **Esono Nsue Nchama**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 9 November 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with the conclusions of the special Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of Central African States, held on 23 June 2000, in Libreville, I have the honour to inform you that, in my capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of the Community, and pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have requested the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly of an additional item entitled "Observer status for the Economic Community of Central African States in the General Assembly".

In this connection, please find attached an explanatory memorandum which has been prepared in conformity with rule 20 of the rules of procedure.

(*Signed*) Santiago **Nsobeya Efuman Nchama**

Appendix

Explanatory memorandum by the Economic Community of Central African States

Introduction

The Heads of State and Government of the following countries of the Central African subregion: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe, decided in 1983 to create the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

In so doing, they demonstrated their firm intention to strive together for subregional integration as a means of improving the well-being of their respective populations.

The Treaty establishing ECCAS entered into force in 1984 and the Community's Secretariat was established in 1985.

It must be acknowledged, however, that because of the many conflicts that have bedevilled most of the States of Central Africa, it has not been possible to realize our long-held dream of transforming our subregion into a haven of peace, cooperation and development.

I. Restoration of a context conducive to regional integration in Central Africa

The Heads of State and Government of the States of the Economic Community of Central African States have identified the lack of confidence engendered by tensions and conflicts as the main cause of the stagnation and paralysis of the Community.

In order to deal with this situation, those States turned to the United Nations and requested its support. Thus, on their initiative, resolution 46/37 B was adopted on 6 December 1991, in implementation of which the Secretary-General of the United Nations established on 28 May 1992 the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

The Committee has served as a preferred forum for political consultations among government representatives of the States of the subregion. Its work has made it possible to conduct continuing high-level consultations and promote the elaboration and adoption of important confidence-building measures, strengthened by the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

It is in this context that the Heads of State and Government of the States members of ECCAS, at the end of the ninth regular session of the Community, held on 24 June 1999 in Malabo, decided to revitalize the activities of the Community, notably by providing it with adequate financial and human resources. Thus, ECCAS can at last become a real instrument for the integration of the economies of its member States and promote development and cooperation among their peoples, with the ultimate objective of making it one of the five pillars of the African Economic Community and helping Central Africa to confront the challenges of globalization more effectively.

II. Main aspects of the revitalization

1. With regard to institution-building, a post of Assistant Secretary-General for Human Integration, Peace and Stability has been established. Central Africa thus acknowledges the importance of peace and security between and within States as a factor of development.

Furthermore, the original treaty has been supplemented by other legal instruments establishing respectively the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, which is responsible for conflict prevention and management, the Central African Multinational Force, a Central African early-warning mechanism and the Defence and Security Commission.

Other measures have been the establishment of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy and especially the creation of a network of Central African parliamentarians, as a prelude to the establishment of a Community Parliament.

2. The rehabilitation of the traditional integration areas has been divided into two components.

With regard to the first component, the following measures have been taken:

- Establishment of an autonomous financing mechanism for ECCAS and integration activities;
- Creation of a fund for development and subregional solidarity;
- Promotion of Community infrastructure projects in the areas of road, maritime and air transport, telecommunications and energy.

As to the second component, a scheme for the liberalization of intra-Community trade and the free movement of persons and goods was to be launched by the reactivation on a trial basis of decision No. 03/CCEG/VI/90, concerning the free movement of certain categories of citizens of member States within ECCAS.

3. New initiatives taken as part of the Central African Community project have been the exploration of new fields of cooperation such as combating poverty and the anti-drug campaign, and the initiation of a new approach involving the private sector and non-governmental organizations in the life of the Community.

III. The Economic Community of Central African States deserves to be granted observer status at the United Nations

The United Nations has already granted observer status to other African regional economic communities, such as the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States. It is therefore necessary to strike a balance with regard to cooperation between the United Nations and the various regions of the world.

Such a step would, moreover, formalize long-standing cooperation which has produced encouraging results in the context of the work of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. It is in this context that confidence has been re-established in the relations between States, thus permitting an effective revival of the Community.

Lastly, this step would have a strong political and diplomatic impact in that the community of nations would be lending its support to the economic integration efforts undertaken by the States of the subregion, with a view to African economic integration.

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Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Observer status for the Economic Community of Central African States in the General Assembly

Letter dated 9 November 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Addendum

Draft resolution
Observer status for the Economic Community of Central African States

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States,

1. *Decides* to invite the Economic Community of Central African States to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.

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General Assembly

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Fifty-fifth session

Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity

Letter dated 13 November 2000 from the representatives of Bulgaria, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

With reference to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we have the honour to request the inclusion of an additional item entitled "Proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity" in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

We recommend that item be considered directly in the plenary meeting.

Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly we attach an explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II).

(*Signed*) Vladimir C. **Sotirov**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Walter **Balzan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Janusz **Stańczyk**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Peter **Tomka**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Ernest **Petrič**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations

00-74890 (E) 151100

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

Solidarity was recognized in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) as one of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century.

The Declaration also states that global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly, in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice and that those who suffer most or who benefit least will receive help from those who benefit most.

Founded 20 years ago, the "Solidarity" social movement, whose significance for the world has been acknowledged, notably in the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to its legendary leader, Lech Walesa, and which was indeed based on solidarity ideals, became a great driving force for change, not only in Poland but also in the broader context, which ultimately toppled the Berlin Wall and led to the revival of democracy behind the Iron Curtain.

This movement also contributed to directing the attention of people on all continents to the increasing importance of solidarity as an essential value in relations between individuals, peoples and nations.

Solidarity is not only a requirement of a moral nature, but also a precondition of the efficiency of the policies of individual countries and peoples. It is one of the guarantees of peace in the world.

We are living in a period of widening gaps between the rich and the poor. Authentic progress will not be possible without cooperation between all nations and peoples in overcoming poverty and without solidarity with the have-nots. We must take a positive responsibility for those who cannot assure themselves of sufficient resources for development, whose human rights are not observed and whose dignity is not respected. They are our common concern.

Let the twenty-first century, therefore, be an age of nations, peoples and individuals committed to solidarity. The lonely road leads inescapably to isolation. Supranational structures, founded precisely on the principle of solidarity but respecting local distinctiveness and cultural diversity, hold out the prospect of full and stable development.

The proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity, coinciding as it does with the anniversary of the birth of the "Solidarity" movement, which inspired and paved the way to the aforementioned changes, would help to promote and strengthen the ideals of solidarity as values essential to relations within and among nations, peoples and individuals.

The proclamation of this day would contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

Solidarity has various dimensions and finds shape in various planes, which is why the proposed draft resolution of the General Assembly indicates the possibility of commemorating the day in a variety of ways and by a variety of means according to local, regional and international needs.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, entitled "United Nations Millennium Declaration", in which it recognized solidarity as one of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century,

Reaffirming its conviction, as it has been expressed by heads of State and Government in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, that global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice,

Mindful of the need for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration,

Emphasizing the importance of solidarity as a moral means of establishing a just and lasting peace in accordance with the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,[1]

Recognizing the role of solidarity in the strengthening of international cooperation and mutual understanding,

Recalling that on 31 August, twenty years ago, the independent "Solidarity" movement was born in Poland and, being based on solidarity ideals, proved to be an important driving force for change that ultimately in an international plane toppled the Berlin Wall and led to the revival of democracy behind the Iron Curtain,

Being aware that only when nations, peoples and individuals base their relations on solidarity ideals, humanity might be saved from wars, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor will be facilitated and respect for human rights and dignity enhanced,

1. *Proclaims* 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity in order to promote and strengthen the ideals of solidarity within and among nations, peoples and individuals;

2. *Urges* Governments and national, regional and international organizations to take appropriate steps to observe the International Day of Solidarity and to extend their full cooperation to civil societies and individuals in observing that day.

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[1] Resolution 2625 (XXV), annex.